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ABSTRACT

Designed for librarians planning community oriented programs, this annotated bibliography critically reviews literature defending the young adult's right to intellectual freedom. Works examined include U.S. English language journal articles and short sections of books published between 1967 and 1979. Within the bibliography and the review, topical divisions present (1) young adult needs and intellectual freedom; (2) the intellectual rights of young adults; (3) legal cases affecting young adults' rights in America; (4) the policy of the American Library Association concerning intellectual freedom for young adults; (5) the librarian's responsibility towards intellectual freedom for young adults; and (6) young adult views on freedom to read. The articles and short book segments are listed in alphabetical order under each heading. (RAA)

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# THE YOUNG ADULT AND INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM IN THE LIBRARY

## A SELECTIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY

## AND

## A CRITICAL REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

BY

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# THE YOUNG ADULT AND INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM IN THE LIBRARY

## PART ONE

## A SELECTIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY

BY

LINDA LAWRENCE SQUYRES

# INTRODUCTION

## Purpose

This booklet contains a bibliography of journal articles and short sections of books that defend the young adult's right to intellectual freedom in the library. It also has a critical review of the information given in these materials. The booklet is designed as an aid to librarians planning to present a community-oriented program on this subject.

## Parameters

### Defining the Young Adult

A young adult is a person that no longer sees himself as a child, but who is not yet an adult. A general definition might be the age group from approximately 7th through the 12th grades. Adolescence is a good, descriptive term for this period. Some people enter adolescence before they reach a chronological teenage. Some become adults while they are still in their teens. Other people tend to retain an adolescent personality well into their twenties.

### A Definition of Intellectual Freedom

It is the philosophy that states that any person may believe what he or she wants to on any subject and express these beliefs in whatever manner he or she feels to be appropriate. A second

portion of this definition, and one that is very important to librarians, is that intellectual freedom promotes freedom of access to all information regardless of the means of communication.

## A Definition of a Library

A place where a person might borrow, view, listen to or read monographs, serials, audio-visual materials, informal publications and unpublished information. A library may contain all or some of the above materials. Library patrons may also receive information from special programs, displays and intelligence sources or be referred to other organizations for help. The general function of libraries is to enable people to obtain information from other people or places that may be distant in imagination, time period and space.

## A Definition of Censorship

There are certain problems involved in giving a definition of censorship. Many people have used this term loosely and then wondered why they were misunderstood. Censorship can mean the failure to choose a book or journal for a library collection. It can mean the removal of a library document because of personal convictions, public pressures or legal action. Censorship has meant the suppression of a "questionable" film and the destruction of sexually explicit pictures.

For the purpose of this bibliography, I am defining censorship as proceedings taken by organizations or private individuals that result in the suppression of expression or communication.

These proceedings may take the form of persuasion, goading, stealthy sequestering, threats, coercion or legal action.

## Scope

The bibliography covers a time period from 1967 through 1979 and is limited to reading material written in the English language. The materials were restricted to those published in the United States. This time period was chosen because historical information was not wanted and current facts were needed. 1967 articles showed the beginning of the American Library Association's interest in the issue of intellectual freedom and teenagers. Legal cases began to occur during this time.

This booklet was intended for librarians working in the United States. English is the common language of citizens in this country. Materials published in the United States were chosen because they dealt with the intellectual freedom concerns of this country. Citizens are mainly concerned with their own country's position on this issue.

## Selection Criteria

1. The information given should not be historical in nature. Facts should be applicable to present day use.
2. Brevity is an important characteristic. Journal articles were chosen over large books that would take a long time to read. Some short segments of books were chosen.

3. The information given should pertain in some way to young adults and their right to intellectual freedom in the library.
4. Articles describing intellectual freedom in a general manner were not useful in this situation. Essays of a vague, philosophical nature would not be appreciated.
5. Clarity is an important characteristic. The information given should be readily understood by most members of a community.
6. If three or more articles deal with the same subject in the same way, one should be chosen to represent the group. Two articles giving two different viewpoints on the same subject would be considered valuable. Two articles giving similar viewpoints on the same subject would be useful to gain "authority" on the opinions expressed. If two articles gave identical viewpoints, one would be chosen to represent the opinion given.
7. A clear, concise writing style is desired.
8. Articles should pertain only to young adult rights in the library. Intellectual freedom issues involving the school classroom and school press were not relevant in this collection.

## Explanation of Search Strategy

### Index Terms

Young Adults, Intellectual Freedom and Library were chosen from the title.

Libraries, Libraries-Censorship, Freedom of Information, Libraries and students, Library legislation, School libraries-Law and legislation, Open and closed shelves, Students, Students-Legal

status, laws, etc., Libraries, Young people's, Youth, Youth and erotica, Books and reading for youth and Children-Law were chosen from the Library of Congress Subject Headings.

ERIC descriptors were: Academic Freedom, Student Rights, Adolescents, Teenagers, Library and Censorship.

LISA descriptors used were: Intellectual Freedom, Young Adults, Censorship and Adolescents.

## Libraries Used

1. Drexel University Library, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
2. The Pedagogical Library of Temple University, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
3. Van Pelt Library of the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

## References Used

1. Library of Congress Subject Headings
2. The Drexel Library card catalog
3. Van Pelt card catalog (in the Van Pelt Library)
4. Thesaurus of ERIC Descriptors
5. Resources in Education
6. Library Literature
7. The bibliography contained in Selection Policies: A Guide to Updating and Writing, by the Intellectual Freedom Committee.
8. Journal articles and books that did not meet the selection criteria, but revealed useful citations.
9. Journal articles that met the selection criteria and revealed useful citations.

10. The ERIC Data Base--search conducted by author.
11. The ERIC Data Base--search conducted by Tim Laborie of the Drexel Library.
12. The LISA Data Base--search conducted by Tim Laborie.

## Arrangement

The first group of articles and book sections in the bibliography give information about Young Adult Needs and Intellectual Freedom. The second set is listed under The Intellectual Rights of Young Adults. The third group of materials is listed under Legal Cases Affecting Young Adults' Rights in Libraries. The fourth set of articles and book sections give information on the American Library Association's Policy Concerning Intellectual Freedom for Young Adults. Young Adult Views on Freedom to Read is the heading for the fifth set. The sixth group is listed under The Librarian's Responsibility Towards Intellectual Freedom for Young Adults. The articles and short book segments are listed in alphabetical order under each heading.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### Young Adult Needs and Intellectual Freedom

Minudri, Regina. "Library and Information Services for Young Adults and Students." In Library and Information Service Needs of the Nation: Proceedings of a Conference on the Needs of Occupational, Ethnic, and Other Groups in the United States, pp. 155-161. Edited by Carlos A. Cuadra and Marcia J. Bates. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1974.

Service to young adults and students varies considerably from what they really want and need. Young adults have become more sophisticated and are less satisfied by traditional approaches. The American Library Association Conference (July 1973) produced four statements: (1) Young adults are entitled to open and equal access to all materials and services, to a confidential client-librarian relationship, and to participation in library decision-making; (2) the unique needs and interests of young adults must be considered when selecting library materials and services; (3) they should have access to all materials and be able to make decisions understanding all options and alternatives; and (4) libraries must develop knowledge of, and liaison with, other information agencies. The young adult is undergoing great physical, emotional and psychological changes. He doesn't see himself as a child; but others do not see him as an adult. Adolescents are an amorphous group, problem-creating and difficult to serve. They make more use of reference and library services than any other age group. They are often made to feel like second-class citizens and are subject to restrictions imposed upon them solely because of their age and status. The educational and reading levels of young adults vary. They are products of mass media and do not see why they should have to wait for needed materials. Young adults get their information from: public libraries, schools, mass media, clubs, church groups, teen centers, switchboards and hot lines. Audio-visual collections are important in serving young adult needs. They need vocational and career information. School, recreational, personal development and skill accomplishment needs must be filled. These

needs can be met by: (1) providing easy access to these materials; (2) providing a well-trained and responsive staff that works with other community agencies; (3) using modern technological advances; and (4) making library facilities attractive. At the present time, there are insufficient funds, materials and staff. Libraries should: (1) communicate with young adults; (2) cooperate with other community agencies and institutions; (3) institute continuing education courses in young adult needs; (4) get increased funding; and (5) communicate with the public.

Young Adult Services of the American Library Association.

Introduction to Directors for Library Service to Young Adults, pp. 1-4. Chicago: American Library Association, 1977.

Young adults form a majority of the users of many libraries. The young adult whose experience with libraries has been positive will become the citizen most likely to continue to use and support libraries. A young adult no longer sees himself as a child; but is not yet an adult. There is a set of tasks that must be mastered during this transition period; (1) achievement of emotional, social and intellectual maturity; (2) independence from parents; (3) adult attitudes towards sex; (4) occupational goals found; (5) satisfactory use of leisure; (6) philosophy of life developed; and (7) self-identify found. Adolescents vacillate between old childish behavior patterns and experimental adult models. The goal of library service to young adults is to aid in the successful transition from childhood to adulthood by providing the needed resources and environment. It is essential that the library recognize that young adult needs are different than other users and that staff and programs should be developed accordingly. Young people wish to be treated with the same respect and regard as adults. The same treatment may not suffice, however. Young adults require sensitive handling. Library personnel must learn to take each request seriously, avoid belittling abilities, create a sense of ease and preserve confidentiality. Policies must not restrict young adults' access to materials or services on the basis of age. In light of the sophistication and expanded scope of interests of young people today, libraries must be flexible and be prepared to welcome them into the adult departments of the library at the point when their reference and recreational needs can no longer be met adequately in the children's department. Librarians should solicit young adult participation in policy making.

## The Intellectual Rights of Young Adults

Broderick, Dorothy M. "Intellectual Freedom and Young Adults." Drexel Library Quarterly 14 (January 1978): 65-77.

Attempts to limit young people's rights come from many sources. Status level is a determinant of censorship success. It is difficult to defend the "right to read" without defending a particular material. Few people realize what legal rights young adults possess. The past decade has seen changes. Tinker v. Des Moines involved the students' right to wear black arm bands protesting the Vietnam War. It decided that: (1) school officials do not have complete authority over students; (2) students possess fundamental, constitutional rights; (3) students are entitled to free expression. Many school administrators are hostile to students. Hostility leads to suppression of expression and freedom of behavior. Most difficult cases involve a split between school or library board members. Down These Mean Streets case: the school board was permitted to restrict the use of a book; but not completely remove it. The U.S. District Court ordered the Strongville (Ohio) education board to replace a censored book. The court said that the First Amendment implies library purchases for all possible citizen tastes. The Supreme Court has not made a judgement on this. It has extended certain rights to young adults involving body control. These decisions, in turn, affect their right to information and referral services in areas of abortion, birth control, drug addiction and venereal disease. In Planned Parenthood of Central Missouri v. Danforth, the Supreme Court ruled that states may not grant parents the right to deny an abortion to minor children. Young people have the right to venereal disease treatment without parental consent in all states. The right to contraceptives varies from state to state. These laws indicate that librarians should provide information freely to young people on all topics. The A.L.A. supports parental right to limit their children's access to information. The author disagrees with this policy and recommends a new one stating all young adult rights.

Farley, John J. "The Reading of Young People." Library Trends 19 (July 1970): 81-88.

The complexity of intellectual freedom is most evident when it is applied to young adults. Adult society has assumed that certain types of reading matter can have undesirable effects upon mind, character and conduct. Restrictions are therefore placed upon the availability of such reading materials. These restrictions are broader for young adults because they are more susceptible to harmful ideas. It has never been scientifically proven that reading can cause improper or immoral conduct. However, this is the popular assumption and the library profession has accepted it

to be true. A tension has resulted from society's lip-service to intellectual freedom as opposed to the practical reality that intellectual freedom never seems to have been generally accepted in the United States. It is therefore not surprising that librarians, especially young adult specialists, face frequent censorship dilemmas. During the past three decades, simultaneously with growth and expansion of adolescent public and school library service, and with increased frankness in printed expression, reports of censorship attempts affecting adolescents have been cited with increased regularity. The attempts to censor young people's reading seem to center on sex and politics. Two ideas are incompatible: (1) adolescents must gradually be led to the appreciation of mature, adult literature, and to the development of their critical faculties by exposure to controversy and (2) reading provided under the school's auspices must reflect adult society's values . The American climate for intellectual freedom for young adults in the library has improved during the closing years of the 1960's. Judging by library literature today, the library profession is committed more than ever to the ideal of intellectual freedom for adolescents. The real danger among the young may well be the erosion of the ideal itself.

Procuniar, Pamela E. "The Intellectual Rights of Children."

Wilson Library Bulletin 51 (October 1976): 163-167.

Many court cases are being fought to decide which materials for adults are protected by the Constitution and whether children share this protection or not. The children's situation is complicated by the informal nature of a majority of these battles. Schools and libraries sometimes give in to the pressures of a vocal minority that complains loudly about a particular book. It is time for action to defend and expand the children's rights. No one has fully defined these rights or completely defended them by suggesting a rationale for their importance. The intellectual rights of children, despite court decisions, are still in the hands of adults reluctant to allow them any degree of freedom. These adults, for the most part, wish to shield children from books that contain ideas or words with which their parents disagree. The more children are protected and sheltered, the less they will be able to function in a democracy. The kind of adults our country will produce may depend on its attitude to the children--are they to be protected or not?

## Legal Cases Affecting Young Adult Rights in the Library

Krug, Judith. "Intellectual Freedom and the Rights of Children." School Media Quarterly 1 (Winter 1973): 111-135.

In the past, adults determined what the children should read, say, listen and view. This practice has been called "in loco parentis". It conflicts with the concept of "intellectual freedom" which permits any person to believe what he wants to on any subject and express his beliefs as he deems appropriate. "Intellectual freedom" promotes freedom of access to all information and ideas regardless of the communication media. This conflict has come to the front with several U.S. Supreme Court rulings. Eighteen to twenty year olds are now permitted to vote. In 1967, the Gault decision recognized juvenile rights to: counsel, cross-examine witnesses and be informed about self incrimination. Tinker vs. Des Moines Independent Community School District (1969) decided that the First Amendment protects the rights of public school children to express their political and social views during school. The Constitution and Bill of Rights apply to all citizens, regardless of age. The word "age" was added in 1967 to the A.L.A.'s Library Bill of Rights statement: "the rights of an individual to the use of a library should not be denied because of his age, race, religion, national origins or social or political views." In 1968, the A.L.A. stated: it is the parent's--and only the parent's--right and responsibility to guide his child--and only his child--in appropriate reading materials. Conclusion: The Supreme Court and the A.L.A. have fought against the concept "in loco parentis" as it relates to the mind.

Levine, Alan H. "Impressionable Minds . . . . Forbidden Subjects: a Case in Point." Library Journal 98 (February 15, 1973): 595-601.

President's Council, District 25 v. Community School Board No. 25 was a court case that began in Queens, New York. A parent complained to the school board that his child had gotten an "unsuitable" book from the school library. The book was Down These Mean Streets by Piri Thomas. The school board voted to remove the book from the library. The New York Civil Liberties Union filed suit in the U.S. District Court. No other school board had been sued for book-banning. The legal issue was the

authority of the school board against the provisions of the First Amendment. After the suit was filed, the board passed a "parent option plan" which permitted those schools which originally had the book to direct loan to parents, but not to students. Other schools in the district remained under the ban imposed by the board's original resolution. The board defended its actions with affidavits of principals and teachers claiming possible harm to children if they read such harsh and vivid language. Eminent psychiatrists and psychologists dismissed these contentions. Junior High students made light of the suggestion that they would be shocked or led astray by the language or sex scenes in the book. They suggested that the censors were defeating themselves by attracting attention to the book. The District Court stated that the school board had the power to remove the book from the library. The Court of Appeals affirmed this decision.

The author of the article disagrees with the court decisions. His position: school boards have legal responsibility for courses of instruction and instructional materials. They should not be permitted to take books found offensive to some and make them unavailable to all.

"School Librarian Opposes Censorship in Court Action." Newsletter on Intellectual Freedom 26 (November 1977): 149,167.

Censorship of Male and Female Under 18 by the Chelsea (Massachusetts) School Committee was challenged in federal court by school librarian Sonja Coleman and a group which she organized, the Right to Read Defense Committee of Chelsea. The local board decided to ban the poetry anthology. In response to Coleman's vigorous defense, the school committee also began to consider firing the librarian. The action against Male and Female Under 18 appeared to reflect the board's dislike of one poem in the anthology, "The City to a Young Girl." The school committee's attorney declared that they had the authority to approve or disapprove works used in the school. The school had legally decided not to include sex education in the curriculum and the poem represented an effort to introduce the subject improperly into the curriculum. The Right to Read Defense Committee contended that the anthology is fully protected under the First Amendment, and that the school committee's objections to the poem "as vulgar and offensive" cannot constitutionally justify its suppression. The U.S. District Court Judge issued a temporary restraining order barring the school committee from penalizing Coleman or her colleagues. He also ordered that the book be returned to circulation with the condition that students reading it first receive parental permission.

"The Strongsville Decision." School Library Journal 23 (November 1976): 23-27.

This case involved Strongville (Ohio) community debate over the type of high school books that should be: (1) selected as text books; (2) purchased for a school library; (3) removed from the library; and (4) forbidden to be taught or assigned in a classroom. Action was brought against school district officials by five public high school students through their parents. The suit claimed violation of the First and Fourteenth Amendment rights. The board, disregarding faculty recommendations, refused to approve Catch 22 and God Bless You, Mr. Rosewater as texts or library books, ordered Cat's Cradle and Catch 22 to be removed from the library, and prohibited classroom discussion of these books or their use as supplemental reading. The school board's counter-complaint was "malicious prosecution". The District Judge denied that the defendents had violated any First or Fourteenth Amendment rights of the plaintiffs. The case went before the Circuit Judge with three issues: (1) the school board's decision not to approve or purchase certain texts; (2) the removal of certain books from the school library; and (3) the academic freedom claims. The Circuit Judge affirmed that the State had committed the duty of selecting and purchasing textbooks to local boards of education. The board's decision was not artibrary or capricious. The second issue: the books were removed for objectionable content, not because of architectural or financial difficulties. The library was created to benefit the students. Conditions should not be placed on its use because of political or social biases. This involves the First Amendment "right to know". The District Judge's decision on this issue was reversed. The third issue: the plaintiffs said the school board had prohibited teachers from referring to the three books in classroom discussions. No definite proof of this action was found.

## The American Library Association's Policy Towards Intellectual Freedom for Young Adults

American Library Association. Office of Intellectual Freedom. Intellectual Freedom Manual. Part 1.: Free Access to Libraries for Minors. Chicago: American Library Association, 1974.

Restriction of reading rooms, collections and library loan service to adult use violates the rights of minors as stated in the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights, Article Five. This article declares: "The rights of an individual

to the use of the library should not be denied because of his age . . .". The word "age" was added as a result of a pre-conference Institute on "Intellectual Freedom and the Teenager" in 1967. Librarians withholding "harmful" books from minors because of real or suspected parental objection are considered guilty of acting "in loco parentis". The A.L.A. believes that only the parents can restrict their children from access to library materials. Differentiating borrower's cards, isolating costly and rare books and maintaining a separate children's collection are not violations provided that patrons aren't refused use of certain collections. Because today's children are more sophisticated, age is no longer a valid index to library use.

American Library Association. Office of Intellectual Freedom. Intellectual Freedom Manual. Part 2.: School Library Bill of Rights. Chicago: American Library Association, 1974.

The American Association of School Librarians states its policy as: (1) maximum access to instructional materials; (2) materials that support curriculum and consider students' needs, interests and maturity levels; (3) teacher and student materials that educate and develop literary and cultural appreciation; (4) materials presenting the ideas and contributions of all groups are provided that students might judge them for themselves; (5) to provide a written statement, approved by the local board of education, stating procedures for meeting censorship attacks; (6) professional personnel to serve teachers and students.

Council of the American Library Association. The Library Bill of Rights. Chicago: American Library Association, 1967.

A.L.A. Policy: (1) library materials to interest and enlighten all; none excluded because of race, nationality or views of author; (2) materials to show all viewpoints of today's concerns; none censored; (3) censorship to be challenged; (4) libraries should aid intellectual freedom fighters; (5) library use not denied because of age, race, religion, nationality or views held; (6) meeting rooms are for all community groups, provided that the meeting is open to the public.

Gaines, Ervin. "Intellectual Freedom and the Teenager." Newsletter on Intellectual Freedom 16 (September 1967): 53-55.

A pre-conference Institute was held in 1967 to determine librarian philosophy on the intellectual rights of young people. Chairman Ervin Gaines observed that many librarians are censors and see no reason to change. Librarians should preserve "better" forms of pornography for posterity; it is a prevalent art form. Other Speakers: Friedenberg: Literature that misrepresents life produces more harm than realistic books. Pornography is dehumanized and doesn't incite the behavior that it portrays. Biggs and Helfand: Young people need the emotional content contained in sexual literature. Denial of this need shows a lack of understanding teens as they see themselves. Rexroth: Books do not create social ills; they pre-exist their representation in literature. Censorship cannot survive in a democracy. Kirsh and Covey: An arena of free ideas is needed. Librarians should overcome their fear of contact with teenagers. Cyr: Public libraries are young people's havens from ambiguous treatment. Censorious attacks on libraries are minimal. Fleisman: The Library Bill of Rights should include the words "age" and "sex". A Bill of Rights for teenagers should be created. Watts: Anti-social behavior and reading are not related. The state shouldn't decide what is suitable for children to read. Cohen: Librarians should examine their book selection policies. Protection is needed for librarians defending intellectual freedom. Allan: Trustees should advocate non-censorious book selection policies. The A.L.A. should conduct a study on the behavioral effects of reading.

Major recommendations: The A.L.A. (with Foundation funding) should conduct a study on the effects of reading on behavior; an office should be established to coordinate studies and defend librarians; and young people should have free access to all books in libraries.

## Young Adult Views on Freedom to Read

Erlick, A.C. "Adolescents' Views on Freedom to Read." Social Education 39 (April/June 1975): 235-237.

In a study by the Purdue Opinion Panel a national sample of high school students was presented with nine statements about censorship issues. Three-fourths of the students were found to have anti-censorship feelings. A sizable minority of youth would be willing to allow outsiders to screen the books they use in school. A close association was found between censorship attitudes

and performance on a vocabulary quiz. Acceptance of censorship was more frequent among students with poor performance on the quiz. 9 to 12% of the respondents reported that both they and their parents had objected to reading assigned books because of profanity in them. Anti-censorship attitudes were linked to academic achievement and English skills. Conclusions: the importance of the English classroom experience was to be emphasized if the subject is to have impact on most students; closed-minded attitudes towards censorship issues appear to be well-developed by high school age.

## The Librarian's Responsibility Towards Intellectual Freedom for Young Adults

Broderick, Dorothy M. "Censorship: A Family Affair?" Top of the News 35 (Spring 1979(: 223-232.

A youth advocate believes in creating conditions under which young people can make their own decisions about life. Psychologically healthy young people live in families with emotionally stable parents that permit their children to grow into autonomous adults. This process is complicated because the ideal is offspring independence coupled with an ongoing, loving relationship. It is very human to want to protect, not free young people. The problem is that adults cannot control life's threats and end up censoring what young people are allowed to hear, read and view, instead. Librarians accomplish this "protection" by the non-selection of materials. Other adults attack school and library materials. The only difference between the two--the range of materials found offensive. Our value system represents an emotional commitment to the world in which we grew up, not the one in which we are presently living. The censors understand that each time a book representing an alternative behavioral mode is bought by a school or library, society comes closer to disregarding the traditional standards of behavior. Unable to respect people's right to view the world differently, we zero in on the expression's form. By objecting to the words, we are spared the need to deal with feelings and ideas. This is a characteristic attitude of many librarians. The library profession must: (1) believe that the more information adolescents have, the more responsible their decision making will be; (2) believe that young people deserve trust and respect and be allowed to make their needs known; (3) value growth potential over stability; (4) value individuality over stereotypic labeling; and (5) believe that there are fewer dangers involved in freedom than authoritarianism.

Kennedy, Sister Marie Martha. "Censorship and the Young Adult Reader." Catholic Library World 46 (October 1974): 122-124.

Censorship is a problem that has long confronted readers. For the young adult to successfully take his place in society, he must have developed a degree of analytical ability and an intelligent understanding that tolerates divergent points of view. Constructive criticism should be encouraged; denial trys to control and dictate. Freedom of the mind is part of our heritage. The trend in some areas that contemporary standards rather than national standards be applied to a "questionable work" would lead to imprudent judgements. The library collection should include books that present a wide view of human experience, giving different sides of controversial issues. Parents' values do not always subscribe to this point of view. The rejection of old traditions can be good if this process leads to greater maturity. Creative thinking is stimulated by a variety of opinions. Young adult readers are more conservative than many people think. By striving to avoid the purchase of offensive titles, a biased librarian could exercise an effective form of censorship. Titles that reflect young adult needs and interests on their own level of understanding and experience are needed. Titles that make them think and feel are often those concerned with real life problems and consequently include elements of sex, religion, profanity and ideologies tha may displease many adults. Adults should not shield young people from what they find objectionable. Young adults must live in this world and work to make it better. Adults are aware of the power of print and fear the acquiring of wrong ideas. Their attempts to censure books stem from good motives.

Osborn, Anne. "How to Annihilate Library Service to Teenagers." School Library Journal 19 (November 1972): 28-30.

A teenager deserves a library that recognizes reality. He needs an information source and study area that does not impose arbitrary, crippling rules on him. His library should recognize that dignity and silence are not prior requisites to learning. The least a library can do for a teenager is to provide some of what he wants as well as what the library has decided he needs. He would like, needs and deserves for other people to stop trying to protect him and allow him the right to choose information for himself. None of these ideas are new; but they are not the norm. Most of all the teenager needs people in libraries to recognize and accept him as a respectable human being. That is not the norm either.

Simpson, Elaine. "Reason, Not Emotion." Top of the News 31 (April 1975): 301-304.

One selection criterion for young adult books, "suitability" for the user, has always caused problems. These problems have intensified with the increase of "true to life" books containing violence, sex and bad language. However, it is a disservice to the young adults to limit them to "puerile interests and simplified writing". A book's characters should speak in their language and its problems be relevant to theirs. If a young person cannot understand what he reads, it will not harm him; while if he can understand, he is ready to read of life situations truly presented. A young person's interpretation of a book will not be the same as an adult's. Each brings a different set of experiences to a book. Adults may read more into an event than is actually there. Especially in drug and sex areas, adults think they are considering whether or not teenagers should do about them. If librarians feed young people a steady diet of pap--they will produce adults that believe lies and cheap sentimentalities because they do not know the truth. This is not protection. It is betrayal. We should recognize that we are living in a changing world with changing values and crucial problems and that a book about today, to be honest, must reflect this world.

# THE YOUNG ADULT AND INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM IN THE LIBRARY

## PART TWO

## A CRITICAL REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

BY

LINDA LAWRENCE SQUYRES

## INTRODUCTION

Intellectual freedom is the philosophy that states that any person may believe what he or she wishes on any subject and express these beliefs in whatever manner he or she feels to be appropriate. Intellectual freedom promotes open access to all information regardless of the means of communication (Krug, 1974).

Society has not fully accepted the idea that young adults are entitled to intellectual freedom in the library. The belief held by many adults that certain reading materials produce harmful effects on the mind, character and behavior of young people bars the acceptance of this right. This idea, though widely accepted, has not been scientifically proven. The psychological experts that espouse the belief that books do little harm to young people have, however, yet to convince the large majority of the American public (Farley, 1970). Attempts to restrict the availability of "harmful" reading matter have occurred continually in schools and libraries.

Reports of censorship attacks affecting adolescents have often been cited in library literature. Journals of the late forties through the mid-sixties reported numerous lists of censored books and magazines. Public attacks on schools and school books alleged to be part of some vague, political conspiracy were frequently cited in the fifties.

American attitude towards intellectual freedom for young people has apparently improved, however, beginning with the close of the 1960's (Farley, 1970). This change of attitude is reflected in the articles printed in library journals. The library profession in particular seems to be increasing its commitment to intellectual freedom for the adolescent. In this paper, I have attempted to bring together current articles and book segments that give evidence of this change.

## CRITICAL DISCUSSION

### Young Adult Needs and Intellectual Freedom

The goal of library service to young adults is to help them successfully become adults by supplying the materials and environment that will foster intellectual, emotional and social development (American Library Association, 1977). To reach this goal it is essential that librarians recognize the particular needs of young adults and how they relate to the concept of intellectual freedom.

Emphasis on individual learning and increased sophistication of school curricula have created a need for student access to a greater range and depth of library materials and services. The Young Adult Services Division of the American Library Association states that it is important that librarians acknowledge this need and the right of young adults to all materials and services, either directly or by interlibrary loan.

The Division also believes that young people need to be treated with the same respect and regard as adults. They should not be made to feel like second-class citizens and be subjected to restrictions imposed because of their age and status. Library personnel should learn to interpret each request for information and to take it seriously. The Division says that they should avoid belittling abilities or dwelling on

faults and try to create a sense of ease and confidentiality. It should be remembered that young adults have a legitimate right to use the library on their own terms--they should not be served as if by the sufferance of some other group of library users (American Library Association, 1977).

Personal development needs are another facet of young adult library needs that must be met with discretion and care. Young people need information on birth control, venereal disease, drug and alcohol addiction and abortion. Unfortunately these subjects have been classified by some librarians as "sensitive areas" in library information and referral services.

> Both public and school librarians share the fear that by referring a young person to a Planned Parenthood clinic or an abortion counseling service they will be putting their jobs on the line, or worse, many librarians do not admit such problems exist among "their" young adults. These problems do exist in every community . . . and pretending they do not is no way to demonstrate professionalism . . . there can be no basis for limiting access to information that would form the basis for making an informed decision about a contemplated action (Broderick, 1978).

## Legal Cases Affecting the Young Adult's Rights in the Library

Library literature has seen an increasing number of court cases involving juvenile rights in recent years. Some cases have produced decisions that affected the legal definition of young adult rights in the library. A large majority of the cases, however, have been limited to the defense of a censored material rather than a public debate on the adolescent's right to read. Each bimonthly issue of the Newsletter on Intellectual Freedom gives a new listing of cases. A few of these legal

decisions concerning young adults have made an important impact on the library world.

Judith Krug, director of the Office for Intellectual Freedom, gives an excellent description of the Supreme Court case Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District in her article entitled "Intellectual Freedom and the Rights of Children". This case produced one of the strongest statements concerning juvenile rights in the past decade. It has since influenced a number of other court decisions.

The 'Tinker' case arose in 1969 when some students decided to publicize their objection to the Vietnam War by wearing black armbands in school. Although there was no disruption of normal school activities, the students were ordered to remove the armbands. They refused and were told to leave school.

The young people filed suit in federal court. They lost their case at both the district court level and in the U.S. Court of Appeals. The Supreme Court, however, reversed these decisions and declared that the First Amendment protects the rights of students to freely express their political and social views during school hours.

Ms. Krug quoted Justice Abe Fortas as saying:

> School officials do not possess absolute authority over their students. Students in schools as well as out of school are "persons" under our Constitution. They are possessed of fundamental rights which the State must respect, just as they themselves must respect their obligations to the State. In our system, students may not be regarded as closed-circuit recipients of only that which the State chooses to communicate. They may not

> be confined to the expression of those sentiments that are officially approved. In the absence of a specific showing of constitutionally valid reasons to regulate their speech, students are entitled to freedom of expression of their views.

"The Strongsville Decision", giving a summation of a recent court case involving juvenile library rights, was printed in the November 1976 issue of School Library Journal. The case originated as a class action suit against Strongsville (Ohio) school officials by five students, through their parents.

> The suit claimed violation of the First and Fourteenth Amendment rights in that the school board, disregarding the recommendation of faculty, refused to approve Joseph Heller's Catch 22 and Kurt Vonnegut's God Bless You, Mr. Rosewater as texts or library books, ordered Vonnegut's Cat's Cradle and Heller's Catch 22 to be removed from the library, and issued resolutions which served to prohibit teacher and student discussion of these books in class or their use as supplemental reading (The Strongsville Division, 1976).

The District Judge denied that the defendants had violated any First or Fourteenth Amendment rights of the plaintiffs. The Circuit Judge ruled, however, that the removal of the books from the school library violated the First Amendment "right to know".

This case, though important in setting a precedent, does not fully establish young adult rights in similar censorship situations. The case was not appealed to the Supreme Court and remains applicable only to Strongsville.

An excellent description of the infamous Down These Mean Streets case is given by the attorney for the plaintiffs in "Impressionable Minds. . . . Forbidden Subjects: a Case in Point." This court case, properly called the President's Council, District 25 v. Community School Board No. 25, began in Queens, New York. A parent complained to the school board that his child had gotten an "unsuitable" book from the school library. The book was Down These Mean Streets by Piri Thomas. The school board voted to remove the book from the library. The New York Civil Liberties Union filed suit in the U.S. District Court. No other school board had been sued for book-banning. The legal issue was the authority of the school board against the provisions of the First Amendment "right to know". The board defended its actions with affidavids of principals and teachers claiming possible harm to children if they read such harsh and vivid language. Eminent psychiatrists and psychologists dismissed these contentions. Students made light of the suggestion that they would be shocked or led astray by the language or sex scenes in the book. They suggested that the censors were defeating themselves by attracting attention to the book.

The school board won its case primarily because it did not completely remove the book from the school system, but instead, imposed restrictions on its use. The District Court stated that the school board had the power to remove the book from the library. The Court of Appeals affirmed this decision.

"Impressionable Minds . . . . Forbidden Subjects: a Case in Point," although giving a detailed description of this case, is definitely prejudiced in favor of the defenders of young adult rights. Levine states his disfavor with the court decision, believing that the school board should not have been permitted to take books found offensive to some and make them unavailable to all. As this review is on materials defending the right of young adults to intellectual freedom, this article was chosen from a number of others to represent this case. Less prejudiced articles are available.

The article "School Librarian Opposes Censorship in Court Action" described an important legal case that occurred in 1977. Censorship of Male and Female Under 18 by the Chelsea (Massachusetts) School Committee was challenged in federal court by school librarian Sonja Coleman and a group which she organized, the Right to Read Defense Committee of Chelsea. The local board decided to ban the poetry anthology. In response to Ms. Coleman's vigorous defense, the school committee also began to consider firing the librarian. The action against Male and Female Under 18 appeared to reflect the board's dislike of one poem in the anthology, "The City to a Young Girl". The school committee's attorney declared that they had the authority to approve or disapprove works used in the school. The school had legally decided not to include sex education in the curriculum and the poem represented an effort to introduce the subject improperly into the curriculum. The Right to Read Defense Committee contended that the anthology is fully protected

under the First Amendment, that students have a right to access to protected materials and that the school committee's objections to the peom as "vulgar and offensive" cannot constitutionally justify its suppression. The U.S. District Court Judge issued a temporary restraining order barring the school committee from penalizing Coleman or her associates. He also demanded that the book be returned to circulation with the condition that students reading it first receive parental permission.

"School Librarian Opposes Censorship in Court Action" presents the main facts of this case briefly and concisely, which suited the selection criteria of the bibliography. However, the article is perhaps too brief and important details may have been left out.

## The American Library Association's Policy Towards Intellectual Freedom for Young Adults

The American Library Association has taken a stand in the defense of intellectual freedom for young adults. One of the first indications of this position was the ideas formulated in the pre-conference on the "Intellectual Freedom and the Teenager" in 1967. Chairman of the conference, Ervin Gaines, gives an excellent summation of this conference in the September 1967 issue of Newsletter on Intellectual Freedom.

The librarians agreed that people of all ages should be allowed free access to all materials and services in the library. They declared that there should be better communication between librarians and adolescents. It was decided that the

word "age" be added to Article Five of the Library Bill of Rights. The Article now reads: "The rights of an individual to the use of a library should not be denied or abridged because of his age, race, religion, national origins, or social or political views" (A.L.A., 1967).

Free Access to Libraries for Minors states that the restriction of reading rooms, collections, and library loan service to adult use violates the rights of minors as stated in Article Five of the Library Bill of Rights. Librarians withholding "harmful" books from minors because of real or suspected parental objection are guilty of acting "in loco parentis". The A.L.A. believes that only parents can restrict their children from access to library materials.

The School Library Bill of Rights states that maximum access to instructional materials should be provided. Materials presenting the ideas and contributions of all groups should be provided that students might judge them for themselves.

## Young Adult Views on Freedom to Read

One of the most definite studies of young adults' reactions to intellectual freedom issues reported in library literature is the 1974 Purdue Opinion Panel Poll. A national sample of high school students was presented with nine statements about intellectual freedom and asked to give the extent of their agreement or disapproval of each.

75% of the students held anti-censorship feelings. 84% had never objected to reading assigned books because of their profane language. A majority of the students felt that people should have access to books that cover all sides of political and social views. Most believed that library rights should not be denied because of age, race, religion, national origin or social or political views. A sizable minority were willing to allow outsiders to screen books they use in school (Erlick, 1975).

## The Librarian's Responsibility Towards Intellectual Freedom for Young Adults

Librarians should attempt to develop a confidential client-librarian relationship (Minudri, 1974). They must learn to overcome their fear of contact with young adults (Gaines, 1967) and give them the trust and respect they deserve (Broderick, 1979).

It should be believed that the more information adolescents have, the more responsible their decision-making will be (Broderick, 1979). Books that present a wide view of human experience, giving different sides of controversial issues, should be provided (Kennedy, 1974). Librarians should not limit young adults to "puerile interests and simplified writing" (Simpson, 1975). They must not strive to avoid "offensive" titles when selecting library books (Kennedy, (1974).

Books must not be held from minors because of real or suspected parental objection (A.L.A., 1972). Librarians should defend the young adult's right to intellectual freedom when censors attack in the library or school (A.L.A., 1967).

Obviously no one article or book section appears to specifically delineate all the librarian's responsibilities towards intellectual freedom for young adults. Many just broadly announce that they must advocate and defend it, without explaining how.

## Progress in the Battle for Intellectual Rights for Young Adults

John Farley believes that progress has been made in recent years in the fight for intellectual freedom for young adults.

> . . . the American climate for intellectual freedom for the adolescent in the library as elsewhere, has improved during the closing years of the 1960's, although this view would be difficult to document. . . . If one judges by the literature of librarianship and by the reports of recent conferences of school librarians (admitting that these may represent the conventional piety rather than the actual practice) the library profession is committed today, with some dissenting voices, more than ever to the ideal of intellectual freedom for the adolescent (Farley, 1970).

He states his belief that the Supreme Court's decision in the 'Tinker" case assures the protection of the First Amendment to children and adolescents.

Pamela Procuniar, on the other hand, says that no one has yet defined young adults' rights fully or defended them completely by suggesting a rationale for their importance.

> Instead we find that there are continued battles over curriculum, textbooks, and individual library books. . . The intellectual rights of children, despite court decisions, are still in the hands of adults reluctant to permit children any degree of freedom (Procuniar, 1976).

## CONCLUSIONS

Articles and books in library literature on the subject of intellectual freedom for young adults appear to be well-written. Their one, however, is philosophical rather than pragmatic. The American Library Association has been especially criticized for this characteristic. Looking at the articles written by the two main authors, Judith Krug and Dorothy Broderick, I would recommend Ms. Broderick as being the most pragmatic. She states her opinions bluntly, but backs them up with definite evidence. Judith Krug is a spirited defender of the intellectual rights of young adults; but her articles tend to fall into philosophical discussions of intellectual freedom.

The writers of the reviewed articles agreed that young adults have personal, social and instructional needs to be filled. They seemed to agree that limiting free access to information and library services would make it difficult to satisfy these needs. There was some disagreement, however, about whether or not there has been significant definition and defense of the intellectual rights of young people in recent years.

The writers agreed that not everyone believes that young adults should have intellectual freedom. They indicate that

many adults, including librarians, are afraid that young adults are not mature enough to sort the information given to them into "good" and "bad". These adults, of course, have different ideas of what is "good" and "bad"; but that doesn't stop them from trying to prevent the "bad" information from reaching young adults.

Librarians are therefore placed in an uneasy situation, according to the writers. The American Library Association declares that they must defend the young adults' right to intellectual freedom against censorship attacks. They must try to curb their own censorship tendencies. Yet, they are given the duty of selecting only the "best" books for young adults and wish to keep their jobs.

This heated issue must be solved. A Supreme Court case declaring exactly what young adults' rights to intellectual freedom in the library are would help; but the attitudes held by many people must also change.